



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Urban Rivers Restoration Pilot Fact Sheet Anacostia River Watershed Restoration, Washington D.C. and Maryland

Background - Since the last century, hazardous substances from industry and from other human activities along the Anacostia River led to elevated PCB, pesticide and heavy metal levels in sediment. Additionally, the lower reach of the river is subject to raw sewage discharges from combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) during rainfalls exceeding one-half inch. The contamination poses health threats to both humans and wildlife. Example: In the 1990's, fish consumption bans were in place for pregnant women and for children. The Anacostia River Watershed area has a population of approximately 867,408 people.

Current Activities - Currently, individual activities along the Anacostia River Watershed are being undertaken by more than 25 public agencies and private non-profit organizations. The goal shared by these groups is to restore the Anacostia River, a American Heritage River that is also within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, to a healthy state. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), for example, received funding in FY02 for initiation of a "Low Impact Development" effort which would allow for the detaining of the initial quarter inch of rainfall, thereby allowing the toxics loading into the river to be significantly reduced.

The several parties working to address this contamination are focusing on six areas for improvement: 1) Reduction of pollution loads, 2) Restoration of ecological integrity, 3) Improvement of fish passage, 4) Increase in wetland acreage, 5) Expansion of forest coverage, and 6) Increase in public and private participation and stewardship.

The urban rivers restoration pilot initiative would strengthen the existing partnerships among these participating organizations, and enable integration of the US EPA's and the Corps efforts into larger watershed based restoration strategies.

Authority and Funding - On the part of the Corps, this effort is being implemented under several authorities including Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended and Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996, as amended. In FY03, activities will continue on four S.1135 projects: Heritage Island Marsh Restoration, Lower Kingman Islands Restoration, Fort Dupont/Fort Chaplin Stream Restoration and Pope Branch Stream Restoration; three S. 206 projects: Watts Branch Stream Restoration, Northwest Branch Restoration and Paint Branch Fish Passage and Stream Restoration. Activities will also continue on the Anacostia and Tributaries Phase I Project. The US EPA has funded activities in this watershed under Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act. (CERCLA).

Points of Contact:

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